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The Highlander

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Haliburton County's Independent Newspaper



Brim Stone #218 (Kayla Wilkins) jamming for Team Canada. Photo by Alanna Clancy

Rollers score silver

Haliburton's Brim Stone on fire

By Erin Lynch

Canada won silver in the Roller Derby Blood and Thunder World Cup, last weekend in Toronto at The Bunker in Downsview Park.

Thirteen teams from across the world competed in a premiere competition that saw the world's best skaters, blockers and jammers battle it out. Participating teams included Finland, Scotland, Argentina, Brazil, Australia, England, New Zealand, Ireland, Germany, France and Sweden.

The event garnered worldwide press attention and tens of thousands of hits on the Internet.

Team Canada played six bouts, essentially blowing away the competition among a packed, passionate home crowd shouting Beaver Fever. But it wasn't until Sunday morning, in game five, that Canada faced its biggest challenge — against Team England. In a nail-biting, evenly-matched game, Canada claimed victory with a final score of 161 to 90, putting them in the World Cup final against Team USA.

Sadly, Team Canada was defeated in the finals by a score of 336 to 33, despite a huge effort and scoring the most points of any team against the USA, referred to by many as "the

dream team". Canada entered the game with an unfortunate roster loss, as Georgia W. Tush of Montreal suffered a broken collarbone earlier in the day against England, robbing the home team of a third of its jammer core that included Luludemon and Iron Wench.

Homegrown roller derby star Kayla Wilkins, aka Brim Stone, played on Team Canada throughout the weekend. Announcers at the World Cup commented on her ability to move through a space the size of a dime; small in stature but huge in heart, Brim Stone played a big game, making the front page of the Toronto Star.

Many local derby players had traveled to Toronto, or watched the games live-streaming on Derby Network, to see their coach, Brim, play in the first world tournament.

The Highland Roller Girls are looking for new members to join the league. An information night is scheduled for December 15 at the Wild Moose between 6 and 9 pm. The league is looking for new skaters, and for referees who can be either men or women. All ages, sizes and abilities are welcome.

For more information, go to their Facebook page — The Highland Roller Girls.

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Dysart et al

No go on condo Martinwood Development refused

By Will Jones

Plans to create a condominium development on the perimeter of the Martinwood Golf Course, near Harcourt, have been refused by Dysart et al council.

A delegation consisting of Martinwood owner, John Lally and planning consultant Heather Sadler, of Ecovue Consulting Services, came before council at its December 5 meeting with a proposal to create a cluster of permanent residential lots on a new, privately maintained road on the edge of the existing golf course. The duo put forward three options: one showing 16 lots; one showing 27; and a third with 87 lots.

Sadler explained that Martinwood Resort has struggled over the years, and so creating new permanent homes around it would help to boost business. She did acknowledge that developments of this kind do not conform to provincial policy but stated, "The Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) was written in the GTA by people who live and work in the GTA and who have no clue about what happens up here. The PPS fails to recognise that there is more to northern Ontario than just resources and a place to put your waste. There is a whole economy going on up here that is dependent upon sustainability and on people continuing to live and work in these communities."

She continued, adding that while the Policy directs all new residential development to be located near existing settlement

areas [except for a maximum of five lots], it is failing to recognise that there are people who wish to live in rural areas; that there are clusters of rural development already, which would not be crippled by the addition of new populations; and, that the infrastructure in rural areas could only benefit from more people helping to pay for its upkeep.

Sadler then addressed the condominium proposal, explaining that the plan with the lowest number of lots would be designed so that the homes had individual water and sewer services. However, she stated that she and the client preferred the options with more lots because they would be designed to use shared services, which would tie in with the Martinwood Resort on the opposite side of the road.

"The more units we can build, the better it is to put in this kind of shared system," said Sadler. "It is all about economies of scale."

Sadler summed up her statement by saying, "What I submit to you today is that this development in one of the proposed forms makes sense. To limit it to the five lots allowed by the PPS does not. It is a recreation-based development, so to allow residential units that are associated with it to be built is sensible."

Reeve Murray Fearrey took a moment before asking the delegation, "I see it as seasonal residential, rather than residential. Could it have a seasonal residential designation? That takes out the conflict of it potentially turning into a hamlet."

Dysart's Director of Planning and Development, Patricia

Martin, was more critical of the plans. She cited employment, the provision of emergency services and access to local amenities as potential headaches for new residents on the site. "One of the biggest questions is, where are people going to work? Where are the jobs for these new permanent residents?" Martin asked. "What are the opportunities for people and what about families? School buses, emergency services, where to get food — there are lots of questions to ask."

Sadler claimed that the development would be predominantly smaller homes not suitable to growing families but council, and Martin especially, were not convinced.

It was then that Martinwood's owner interjected. "We're doing good things at Martinwood," said Lally. "We already bring business to the area thanks to our snowmobiling clients in winter and golfers in summer. We're renovating the main building. I'm using local contractors, and the new fractional ownership resort that we are developing will bring even more business to the area. All of this money is coming into Dysart, into Haliburton."

"But, if you say I have to start small then I will. I'll start with five homes and if they are a success, then maybe we can think about more."

Fearrey replied that he wouldn't have a problem with five new properties but added that he couldn't guarantee that permission would be granted for more. He concluded, saying, "Thank you for your time, and I presume you'll proceed with severance applications, then."

Mystery donation allocated

By Will Jones

Council has now released details of how the remainder of a \$100,000 anonymous donation to the municipality will be spent. The announcement follows last month's revelation that the donor had stipulated \$40,000 of the total be put towards renovating the fighter plane that stands in the high school playing field.

Reeve Murray Fearrey announced at the December 5 council meeting that the donor had requested \$10,000 be set aside for the upkeep of the locomotive sitting alongside the plane. Councillor Andrea Roberts asked how the council could accept the donation for the locomotive, as it is owned by the Rotary Club. Fearrey stated that this had been anticipated and that

council would simply direct the required portion of funds to the Rotary Club.

"The remaining \$50,000 — \$10,000 per year for five years — is to be used for local recreation events and promotion, to be considered by council," he continued.

Fearrey announced the first part of the \$100,000 donation at the Remembrance Day dinner on November 11. He has gone on to state that the donor is a person very familiar with the area, someone who wanted to help out with community projects that would not see funding from government or taxpayers. The Reeve stated that the monies left to the discretion of the council will be spent wisely, and after due consideration. "We won't rush into any decisions and we will endeavour to keep the donor informed as to what we propose to spend the money on."

Dysart et al

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Council coaxes farmers back

Market will return to Haliburton Village for final weeks of 2012 season

By Will Jones

The Haliburton County Farmers' Market will be returning to Haliburton in 2012, for part of the season at least.

The association's Chair, Angel Taylor, and Farmers' Market Manager, Angela McGreevy, met with Dysart council at its regular monthly meeting on December 5. The duo discussed an offer made by the council to bring the market back into the village, agreeing that holding the market at Rotary Park for the latter third of its seasonal run would be a good way to assess the new location and arrangements from both parties' perspectives.

McGreevy said, "As we begin to plan this move, it would be good to have a dialogue with council on topics

such as parking and traffic, the availability of hydro and hours of business."

She explained that the market would begin its season at the Carnarvon venue, where it was held in 2010 and 2011, but move to Haliburton as of Labour Day. The market would begin trading at Rotary Park from Friday September 7, for a total of five market days running through till the end of the season on October 5.

Currently, market hours are proposed to be similar to those at the Carnarvon site – 1pm to 5pm – although both McGreevy and Reeve Murray Fearrey thought it might be beneficial to working residents if the market were to run a little later into the evening.

"Opening from two until six would give locals who work more of an opportunity to come along," said Fearrey.

"Yes, we are still tweaking times and I can talk to the

stallholders about it," responded McGreevy.

Ward One councilor, Andrea Roberts, stated that she would approach the BIA to see if they could be of assistance in promoting the market, perhaps even having sales on Fridays to bring more people into town.

The Haliburton County Farmers' Market was established in 2009. In its first year, the market was located at Roberts Marina, close to town. However, following some confusion about the availability of a location closer to the village, and possible fees being charged to stallholders, the market moved to Carnarvon.

Reeve Fearrey was obviously pleased to see the market back in Dysart and Haliburton Village, stating in conclusion, "Thank you for your response to our request. The market will be good for downtown and we look forward to making it successful, with you."

New Years Eve 2011 Celebration

Start Times:
 Dinner 6:00pm, 7:00pm & 8:00pm
 Show 9:30pm

Show \$35.00
Dinner & show \$67.50
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COME MEET THE HIGHLAND ROLLER GIRLS AND MAYBE BECOME ONE!!

Wild Moose, Wiganog Resort
Thursday, December 15th 2011 6-9pm

Come join us at the for a fun, casual night, meet the Highland Roller Girls and find out how you can become a part of the action!

The Highland Roller Girls will be starting a "Fresh Meat" training session in January. We are looking for women AND men of all ages, shapes, sizes and abilities to join us as skaters or referees. We're inviting people to stop by the Wild Moose to find out more about this fantastic sport. You can talk to other Roller Girls and find out why we love roller derby so much, find out about equipment, ask questions and have fun!

Find the Highland Roller Girls on Facebook or email us for more information at highlandrollergirls@gmail.com

WARNING:
 Roller Derby can be highly addictive. Use caution.

THIS BEAR KNOWS HOW AWESOME ROLLER DERBY IS. DO YOU?

Tell us your Opinion

Send your letters to the editor to letters@haliburtonhighlander.ca

Editorial opinion



Patrick Books (1988 - 1992): a short lesson in shopping where you live

By Stephen Patrick

Some 24 years ago my spouse and I made the highly risky decision to start our own retail business in downtown Haliburton. We opened Patrick Books, a small, high quality, general bookstore, in an 800 square foot space in Halco Plaza.

Risky? You bet, at least for us and for a number of reasons.

Firstly it required a lot of upfront capital, and we weren't rich. Secondly, the common wisdom on the street among both retailers and prominent business people was that Haliburton would never support such a store, catering as it did to environmentalists, intellectuals of all stripes, feminists, 'new-agers', as well as to general readers young and old. As well, Haliburton Village already had a small well-established bookstore, Cathy Stouffer's Masters Books, which back then had a mainly Christian focus with a very good children's section.

We opened around the middle of June with a small, carefully chosen inventory. Small, because no publisher back then would extend credit to a new bookseller; everything for the first few months had to be prepaid. But we had a respectable store, nevertheless, and as that glorious 1988 summer wore on the business prospered, big time. Sales dropped in September by about 75 percent, but Thanksgiving saw boffo business, more than matching summer weekends.

And then, sales plummeted abruptly. We knew this would happen of course, but the contrast was still a shock. It was clear by mid-November that the survival of the store into the next summer would be entirely dependent on our Christmas business. We stretched every dollar we could beg or borrow to provide the best and most interesting holiday season selections. We advertised as we could. And crossed our fingers so hard it hurt.

Our loyal customers, indeed the entire community responded by making our month of December as profitable as a couple of high summer weeks. And we reached those figures despite the fact that our competition in the bigger towns and cities were offering cutthroat deals on all the newest fiction releases, as well as massive loss-leader offers. We survived our first year, but only just. After our second summer, with the help of the HCDC, we moved into a much larger location on the main drag, in the new Dawson-Gray building, and sales soared again.

But the plain, brutal retail cash flow reality in Haliburton County never really changed: consider that we would make more money in a couple of hours on a rainy July morning than we would for the entire month of January, or April, or November. And without the December holiday season, we'd have been sunk. On some mid-week January days we'd be lucky to gross \$100; we had one day where we sold three books, total gross: \$14.95. And this was before the Internet spawned Amazon.com and all the other online alternatives.

The money most retailers make at the end of long, hard days goes into supporting their families and other local businesses. The bucks don't go offshore, they don't find their way into any corporate maw. The cash stays here, providing grit and texture to our collective lives.

Online shopping is always tempting, we realize. But consider the following: a friend of mine found a high-priced product online recently that he assumed wasn't available locally, and was about to place his order. I said take another look – such and such a store deals in this product – give them another chance. Sure enough, the store had actually just got the product in, and was happy to make a fair deal. My friend saved over \$100 in shipping and duty charges.

Many retailers are happy to provide this kind of service, given a chance. So invest in our future — make our main street buzz this holiday season wherever you can.



By Bram Lebo

Making an effort

Being part of a newspaper with a special Shop Local section does tend to focus your mind on the subject.

This past week, I've been asking friends, colleagues and neighbours where they are buying Christmas gifts for this year. A surprising number (to me, at least) have admitted to shopping out of the county.

What exactly can't they get, I wonder, in the many stores of all

kinds we have here?

A walkabout in Minden or Haliburton will turn up a great selection of clothes and sporting goods, toys and electronics. Going further afield leads one to stumble upon one-of-a-kind art, jewellery, ceramics and winter gear; maple syrup to maple wine.

I'm not naïve enough to believe the average teenager would be thrilled by a hand-knitted scarf. But I do retain enough of my cockeyed optimism to persist in the notion that we could all adjust our expectations just a smidge if it meant another local job, one less family at the food bank.

Last year on vacation in Florida, I objected to a Walmart greeter looking in my bag. Clearly no thief, I asked her why she needed to search me when the store has electronic tags on every item, making a visual inspection somewhat redundant.

"Sir, I'm eighty-two years old," she pleaded, "I need this job to pay my bills. Please just let me take a look."

I did.

But it was I who was looking — at a nation that forces octogenarians to work for their supper, at minimum wage, and at a woman who had clearly paid her dues, only to have them taken away. That's the "efficiency" Walmart and stores like it have brought to the US and, at an accelerating pace, to us here in Canada. That's the high cost of an unrelenting demand for low prices: Walmart and companies like it force suppliers to move production — and jobs — overseas, where wages are low and conditions often inhuman. Low wages at home mean less tax revenue and less money for schools and seniors. Companies have gone bankrupt trying to supply goods at always low prices.

No question, some local merchants also have their fair share of Chinese-made products. But the employees serving customers are 100 percent local, as are those delivering services, from carpentry to catering. Of course if we showed some appetite, local goods would follow.

So I ask again, have we become so commercially-oriented that we can't adjust our behaviour for the common good, buy one less or one different thing if it means one more local job? I admit, I don't always succeed in living up to my own principles in this regard, but it's worth putting forth an effort.

It is after all, the season of good will, where the spirit is, in theory at least, more important than the gifts. But every time we shop out of the county, we make it more like the season of Goodwill instead. This year, support your local merchants.

Merrily, merrily

Grammar can be a bottomless swamp for newspapers. Too strict, and we risk sounding like public service announcements from the 1950s. Too loose, and our readers might not understand a sentence without reading it three times over.

So it was with *Shop Local*. Yes, we know there's some case law, if you will, for *Shop Locally* as the proper phrase. We thought about that, and discussed it. Quite a bit.

What we decided was that *locally*, used as an adverb to modify *shop*, would mean to *shop in a local way* as opposed so some other kind of way, such as shopping merrily.

That is not, of course, what we mean. We mean local as a destination, not as a special kind of shopping; we therefore stand behind *Shop Local* as the correct phrase, similar to Buy Local, Go Green, Drive Smart and other such phrases, *avante garde* as they may seem to some.

No doubt, a few grammarians across the county will go into paroxysms over our usage. We can only hope they manage to remain calm and not, as some would have it, remain calmly.

TheHighlander

Haliburton County's Independent Newspaper

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Letters to the Editor

“Hunting has always been such a big part of Haliburton County.”

Dear Editor:

In response to last week’s letter re the Bragging Board: it was so great to see all the hunters on the Bragging Board not one week, but two. They were all so proud, especially the young ones. I cooked for several years in a hunt camp and have seen first hand the young kids get their first deer. Hunting has always been such a big part of Haliburton County. As far as I am concerned, no apology is needed. I look forward to seeing more of the Bragging Board.

Mary Stiver
Haliburton

Re: Catholic Church Please document your grave assertion

Dear Editor:

I usually appreciate the writings of your columnist Victoria Ward. However, I remain puzzled by her grave assertion that the Catholic Church “helped to keep the population scared and obedient” in the early Middle Ages.

As an active member of my local parish I would really be grateful to Ms Ward if she would document her assertion with the help of Vatican position papers in her next column.

I am, within my own humble role as a lay and unofficial educator, dedicated to helping my clergy continuing its avoidance of extreme measures intended to keep — for example, our female teenagers — scared and obedient as the present Kingston drowning court case unveils its sad evidence. I am looking forward to read again soon Ms Ward’s encouraging words for social activists and other Occupiers.

Mr. C. Lutz Haliburton, ON

“There is too much cruelty in this sport”

Dear Editor:

Trophy photos – obscene to most people. A trophy represents an acknowledgment of a feat well done. Hiding behind a tree with a high-powered rifle/arrow to take down a helpless animal is not an act of bravery to many people. Yes, in some cases it an act of necessity but bragging would not enter into it. A need to eat is quite different from a need to kill.

Another part of this gruesome “sport” is the many abused dogs that suffer over and over from one year to the next. They are chained to boxes and ignored for 50 weeks of the year. The “lucky” ones die young but many suffer through the cold, heat and loneliness from one year to the next. After every hunt there are people dealing with the “leftovers” — malnourished, frightened animals. Unfortunately, many are

sent back “home”.

As for hunting being a “source of affordable food”, yes – for the people that hunt out of necessity; but when you see the machines, gear, clothing, accommodations etc., need doesn’t enter into it.

There is too much cruelty in this “sport” Hopefully the responsible people will change this.

Yes, Bram – we should “respect and revere the creatures among us” – all creatures!

P.S. To the person signing “anonymous” – I understand. My experience with a few of these men when approached about their chained dogs has made me fearful and believe me I am not alone!

Phipps Family, Haliburton

Reader suggests turning the page

Dear Editor:

With regard to the letter in [the Nov 24] Highlander from “anonymous” about the “bragging board”: you say you do not want to force or preach your path onto others, and you don’t say anything to the person you live with, who is a hunter. So why did you write the letter?

Haliburton Highlands has long been and will continue to be a hunting community and people are proud of their trophies; it is a Canadian tradition.

If you grew a wonderful vegetable garden that you were proud enough to send a picture of it to the paper, I bet that a hunter

would not complain!

The Ministry of Natural Resources allows a certain number of deer to be taken by hunters, so the area can maintain a healthy stock, or ecosystem of wildlife.

Now my suggestion to you is to accept life in the Highlands, and if, by chance, you come across something in the paper you find appalling, just turn the page quickly. Personally, myself and many of my local friends that I spoke with like the “bragging board” and the job that The Highlander is doing bringing news and topics that are relevant to this community and its peoples.

Lenny James Snell, Minden, ON

The Outsider — Not, in hot water Part 2

By Will Jones

Previously in The Outsider: our intrepid immigrant had fallen foul of a leak in his bathroom and, after exhausting all other options, been forced to rip out the bath (a moulded fibreglass bath of Canadian manufacture with no removable front panel, I should add), along with one corner of the house to find the source of the problem.

After a day’s hard labour, and much to his relief, the bath was extricated. “Best check on that leak now,” said the father-in-law. “ARGHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

And so it was to the leak. But this was no ordinary leak. Yes, it went drip, drip, drip but no, it wasn’t emanating from the waste pipe under the bath and neither was it coming from the water pipes connecting to the taps, at least not from where I could see.

The leak was in the void between the two floors.

I grimaced. Maybe I should have tackled the problem from below and taken the washroom ceiling out, as advised. Maybe I should have cut a hole in the stairway wall; taken a side-on approach, again as prompted. Damn it. Instead, I had ransacked the bathroom. Taken power tools to the tub no less, and there was simply no going back now.

Casting off the gathering fug of gloom, I reached for the jig saw once again and began to slice a large chunk out of the floor.

GrrrrrrRRRRRAARRR! The blade hit something hard.

Now, those of you of a wicked disposition will be wishing a deluge upon me at this moment. You predict me cutting right through the water pipe, getting partially drowned and then listening helplessly as the ceiling below (the one I didn’t take down) collapses. That’s the comedic route to go with this column, I guess — but I’m much more pompous than that. No, the thing that I hit was a large ceiling joist, a joist that would have made it impossible to go in through the side, as had been suggested. “HA!”

I reassessed my options and, cutting a smaller hole, gained somewhat awkward entry into the floor void. My first glance at the leak; drip, drip, drip, it went.

“HA HA!” I cackled. “We’d never have been able to get at it from below, look at all those other pipes blocking the way!” My way had been the right way all along. I beamed with pride.

“We still need to mend the leak, though,” said the father-in-law, “and it’s in a bugga of a spot.”

Bump. I crashed back to earth from the small cloud of self-righteousness I’d been riding.

Six hours, four skinned knuckles, three trips to the hardware store and two achy backs later, and the leak was fixed. We hadn’t installed the new bath (that’s a whole other story). We still had no water in the house. Little Z would not be bathing tonight but we had fixed the leak.

Jumping forward in time a week or so and the parents-in-law have departed. I hope their stint without washing didn’t offend fellow passengers on the flight back to the UK.

We now have a new bath but it also has a moulded front, so if the pipe bursts again I’ll be ranting about idiotic Canadian bath design once more, while ripping apart the bathroom a second time. Or will I?

You see, currently our bathroom is in a state of flux, so to speak. Said bath is installed and working well (Little Z is back to his old colour, only after some serious scrubbing, I might add) but the redecoration process has stalled. The walls are a jumble of badly-fitting drywall, timber studs and bulges of insulation from where we extricated the original bath module, accented by strips of different coloured paint from behind the timber beading that was ripped down in the process.

I like this state of semi-redecoration. I call it a ‘deconstructivist ambience’ and see the charm of this leftfield outpost of interior design. And, it gives easy access to the pipes, too.

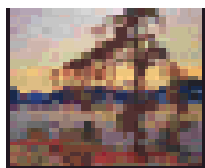
My wife, on the other hand, doesn’t concur. She rants incessantly that it’s “a blinkin’ mess that needs sorting out, sharpish!” And, two rants in one column (even a two-part column) is one too many, so I’ll leave that story for another time.



Make it a Dramatic Christmas

what's on STAGE THIS SUMMER?

Highlands Summer Festival 2012



Colours in the Storm

musical by Guy Richard

Colours in the Storm tells the story of Tom Thomson, one of Canada's best loved painters. But Thomson is perhaps as famous for the controversy surrounding his death as he is for the strength of his paintings. He died in mysterious circumstances in the midst of Canada's first. The musical is filled with lively and haunting melodies evocative of the beauty of the Highlands where each one man's struggle is to realize his own potential.



ARSENIC & Old Lace

comedy by Joseph Kesselring

Meet Abby and Martha Brewster, the charming and innocent ladies who operate a board ing house, supposedly for elderly customers. The two spinster sisters interview their potential boarders to ensure they will be socially and religiously "acceptable" roomers and then ... well, perhaps you'll have to discover for yourself. Their deliciously complex, who believes he is Teddy Roosevelt, unwittingly assists in their schemes.



Sweetheart

The Mary Pickford Story
a one-woman musical by Dean Racy

The dark side of celebrity... a new technology which changed the way we see the world. The Canadian who is the first to make an industry. The story of silent film star Mary Pickford. Hollywood in the 1920's was a one-woman show and one of Canada's own was the number one game in town. In a time when everyone wanted "cute", with big world-famous Gladys Smith from sky scraping through he sets to become the most famous face on the planet.



Steel Magnolias

comedy by Robert Horley

There is a sentimental story of friendship and trust. Steel Magnolias serves up a slice of life that has warmed and comforted as mother's apple pie with a heaping side of laughter. In the world of Thurgood's local home-grown beauty salon, six very different women come together to share their secrets, fears and love stories. Another really engaging story for audience in hysterical, neighbourly gossip.

Within Reach

musical by Guy Richard

This performance, created by the Highlands Summer Festival, is a poignant and sometimes hilarious look at the life story of education for young women. It is a collective work by young performers of Haliburton County, using words and thought's combination of dance, theatre and music, to place the journey for women as they look for an education "equal to that of their brothers" and celebrates where they are today.

Opera, Opera Opera



Master Classes

An opportunity to hear what makes a great opera performance even better. As experienced singers and participants receive a professional lesson from an opera professional.

Richard Margison and Friends

A fund-raising concert featuring a variety of outstanding Musical Professionals at the Northern Lights Performing Arts Pavilion in Haliburton. This is an annual fund-raiser for the Highlands Opera Studio.

Excerpt Concerts

The past performances in the Highlands Opera Studio present some of the best loved works from the world of opera. Hear today's dramatic scenes like selections from famous operas from around the world. A different program for each of the three concert series. These concerts are held in conjunction with the Forest Festival and will be held at the fabulous Carleton Place Amphitheatre on some warm nights in the Forest.

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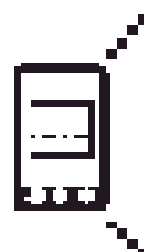
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Around the county

Reid wants eyesore razed

By Jerry Grozelle

Minden Hills has asked for a commitment from County Council regarding the demolition of the old Walker service station on Highway 35. The property is being considered as the site of a new county Emergency Medical Services (EMS) base and fire hall for the municipality.

At the November meeting of the County Council Roads Committee, Minden Hills Reeve Barb Reid informed council that a property standards complaint was imminent. “We’ve been trying to be proactive,” she said.

A local eyesore, the Walker property on Highway 35 has been derelict for many years. With redevelopment looming, the demolition request had some members of council wondering why the rush. Asked who would be making the complaint, Reid responded that the information was confidential.

"We're into December and what I'm asking for is a little bit of room here," responded Warden Murray Fearrey. "This seems to be a lot of money to remove this. This is starting to be quite a sinkhole for money, this property, quite frankly. It's going to have to be a part of the budget consideration. We just don't have the money right now. It could well be that we would challenge that and go to court and not remove it till next year, but I prefer to try to get a solution here if we can."

Fearrey suggested that the county make a commitment to review the situation in March or April, in an effort to satisfy the unknown complainant.

"The thing is, once the property complaint is filed, there is a process that kicks in. I believe the window is about sixty days and then the municipality would come in and do the work, and then charge the county," Reid said.

"What is the property standards issue?" Fearrey asked. "Is it because it's vacant? Because the windows aren't broken and there's no junk in the yard?"

"It's unsightly," Reid replied.

Councilor Carol Moffatt offered the suggestion that since Minden Hills is negotiating with the county regarding a potential partnership on the use of the property, it could defer dealing with the complaint until the decision on moving forward with the combined EMS base and fire station is made. "Why would you pursue that, especially when you want to partner on that land?" Moffatt asked.

"Well, that's the dilemma," Reid said. "That's why we've been talking about it all summer."

Moffatt countered that this was the first time she'd heard about it.

Reid said there had been several conversations about the Walker property and about what could be done about the building if redevelopment were delayed. "Minden Hills does not want to be looking at that property for the next several years and we now have a property standards by-law, as of June 30th, to deal with properties such as that in our municipality," Reid said. "It is a very awkward position because we are partners in the redevelopment plan, which is why we've been trying not to push it. But we are at the point now where, as responsible property owners, the county needs to deal with it." Reid added that it would probably be cheaper to remove the building and deal with the contaminated soil now, compared to two or three years down the road.

Councilor Liz Daniels said she it was a difficult situation. “I do sympathize with Minden Hills,” she said. “I can see the efforts they are trying to make to improve the appearance of the community and they are apparently going to be fairly aggressive about it.” She added however that there could be some cost savings in waiting to do the work until the property is redeveloped.

Fearrey said that was his point. “That’s why I suggested the compromise. If you’re going to dig it all out and fill it back in, and then dig it all back out for the new structure that we’re putting in, that doesn’t seem to make much sense.”

Reid said that the requirement for demolition could be deferred if a firm date for redevelopment is set soon. "If we have a plan to develop, we can wait for another three months; but if we have no plan, then it has to come down."

Fearrey said a date would be submitted at the December county council meeting for the municipality to consider. "You can like it or dislike it and we'll go from there," he said.



Murray **Fearrey**
County Warden

“If you’re going to dig it all out and fill it back in, and then dig it all back out for the new structure that we’re putting in, that doesn’t seem to make much sense.”



Barb **Reid**
Reeve, Minden Hills

“Minden Hills does not want to be looking at that property for the next several years.”





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Highlander arts

State of the Arts By Victoria Ward

Conjuring creativity

With a little help from Hydro One



During a power outage recently I was awed by our universe. It was one of those incredibly clear nights and the Milky Way was so bright it seemed as though I could reach out and grab at its gossamer shine. And it was quiet. Traffic all but stopped on the tertiary highway near my home. The silence became its own beautiful harmony. The modern world had disappeared and its hum a distant memory. I soaked in the ancient vibe of nothing and went into a dream. And then I got bored.

It might be a shameful thing to say, but I love electricity and all its useful conveniences. I love my computer and my TV and my fridge and my toaster and my pump that makes the water work and my lights that keep me sane during these long, long winter nights. I'm not the kind of artist who just needs a paper and a pencil to make magic. First off, I don't really make magic. Magic is one of those words that people who don't draw or make things use to imply that art comes from some mysterious place. It does, kind of, but it ain't magic.

Conjuring creativity isn't really mystical at all. Creativity comes to a person who is open to it and has been given confidence. Encouragement is what breeds creativity. Even the most isolated loner artist needs support, and if they tell you they don't, they're lying. Armed with encouragement, an open mind and electricity, I can do all sorts of things.

Technology has always played a role, and an important one at that. The great 17th century Dutch artist, Johannes Vermeer, spawned an entire industry around theories about his use of the camera obscura. The camera was a stunning invention that allowed artists to create geometrically precise imagery. Although I believe in technology and all its wonderful ability to certainly make our lives better, I do sometimes feel as though it is leading us, and not the other way around. I sometimes have a creepy feeling that our hand-held devices are more us than us. And when you are looking at art through a device, what are you looking at? I would say the device. Recently there was an exhibition in Toronto by the British artist David Hockney. He made images of flowers on his iPad; the show was universally panned.

What is he doing working on an iPad? No interview with him elicited an answer to this question. He is at that stately artist age where he can be deliberately obtuse.

Then I bought the Icelandic phenom Björk's new CD, and it's brilliant as usual; it was also made with an iPad. I sought out why she was so enamoured by this technology and found a more satisfying answer: her reason, which is probably Hockney's as well — because it was there. It was just another tool for expression.

So, one artist uses something new and succeeds, one doesn't. It is a pretty fair average in art making.

Not everyone is going to be lucky with new technology (Björk has composed her music electronically for 20 years). These (insert crotchety accent) 'new fangled things' won't ever replace using paint and a brush, or bronze or marble. Artists won't become geeks just to learn how to use these things. But we will always want to experiment with technology because it helps us 'conjure the mystical'.

When I look at the universe as I did the other night, I see potential and poetry. You can also click an app that tells you what constellation you are looking at and its history. You don't really need to do both, but if you are heading to the studio....

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Nutcracker pops

Loretta Kerr's swan song reprises her first Nutcracker role

By Terrance Gavan

The Nutcracker – Northern Lights Pavilion at Hal High
Saturday, Dec 10 – 7:30 pm; and Sunday, Dec 11 at 2 pm
Director Julie Barban

Many young ballerinas grow up waiting for that breathless chance to portray Marie on the stage.

Marie – also known as Clara – is the dreamer that brings this unforgettable Christmas ballet to life.

Nutcracker is the sanguine tale of an anthropomorphized toy box and an annual reminder that Christmas is nigh; it is a ballet that drives the sweet seasonal hum and forges childhood bliss. To sleep, like Marie, and perchance... to dream. Of sugarplum fairies, princesses, soldiers, mice and men.

Loretta Kerr is an extraordinary dancer. Her own sleepy opportunity to play Marie came, incongruously, way back in 2004. She was only 10 years old, and it was her first Nutcracker. That 2004 production was also Heritage Ballet director and choreographer Julie Barban's inaugural Haliburton production of The Nutcracker.

Barban and Kerr have been doing it ever since. Seven years of swords, rifles, pas de deux, pliés, arabesques, a mean Mouse King and some wonderful pitched battles. And that music. Who can forget that music?

Grown-up dreams

Kerr says that music opens the floodgates to some really fond and now bittersweet memories.

"Every piece of music I hear during these rehearsals, I can think back and remember how I danced to the song," says Kerr, who will be leaving Haliburton for university next fall. Her dad, Bill Kerr just opened a dental clinic in Minden – he also volunteers with the dental outreach in Haliburton – and Loretta wants to follow him into dental medicine, her



woolgathered hope to one day occupy an office and chair in her dad's Minden clinic.

"I'm doing a science degree and have applied to both McMaster and Guelph," says Kerr. "That's the dream." Kerr and her friend, Kestrel Woodley, just finished testing for their grade seven ballet and their goal is to finish their studies in the spring with their final grade. "That's the last grade and we're both working hard to accomplish that goal."

Once more for old times

Call it a storybook bookend to a storied run for Loretta Kerr. Last year, Kerr played what she feels is the most challenging role in the famous ballet, the Sugarplum Fairy. But earlier this season, she and Barban discussed options and decided that she should dance "like it was 2004."

"Julie and I had been talking about it," says Kerr. "I consider Sugarplum to be the most prestigious role and every

year you want to take on more, but we decided that I should come back to Marie."

Asked what she'll bring to the role this time around, Kerr is succinct: "Marie is on stage for the majority of the time — it's her dream after all. The role is pretty versatile and I feel that through the choreography we've worked on, I will be as technically challenged as I was last year. Instead of having one solo, I dance through the whole show."

I had an opportunity to watch Kerr and the whole troupe in a run-through at the packed Heritage Dance Studio, just below Stedmans in the downtown Haliburton mall. Nutcracker aficionados are in for a treat this year.

Kerr moves gracefully through her role, but also finds time to kibbutz, cajole and connect with every one of the players, including old hands like Jack Brezina. "About seven years ago, Jack played my father in the ballet," laughs Kerr. That was in her ingénue days; now, she acts as an on-stage director and mentor. She finds that part of her growth most rewarding.

"It's definitely overwhelming, putting on this production, and I know Julie relies on me to help. It's all run pretty smoothly [in the past], and every year I enjoy it more and more. You become familiar with the story and the music; it's been a big part of my life growing up."

Her fondest memories?

"I'd say the kids, the young dancers," smiles Kerr. "It's been the same kids every year, and my favorite part of the whole show is interacting with them. They're so much fun to be around."

"At rehearsal on Sunday I went into a hard arabesque move and one of the little girl's eyes popped wide open; she gasped. I know that feeling. She was thinking, 'I can't wait until I can do that.' Part of my job on the night of the ballet is to help the younger kids, because Julie is up in the booth. I love working with them. They're so cute."

Big Win for the Peewee A's

Submitted by Kareena Crofts

What a busy weekend of hockey! Dr. Ed Smolens Family Dentistry Peewee A's traveled to Campbellford Saturday for a one-day tournament. Our first game was at 10am against the Prince Edward County Kings, and the Storm skated away with a 5-1 win. Four of the five goals went to Matt Wilbee, with the fifth scored by Chase Burden. Assists went to Jake Bishop, Chris Thompson (two), Josh Boice, Greg Crofts, Devyn Prentice, Max MacNaull, Mark Saville and Jake Bull.

Next up were our local rivals, the Bracebridge Bears. We'd won our last game against the Bears, and knew they would be pumped for this one. Both teams played well, with the Storm coming out on top 3-1. Jake Bull, assisted by Matt

Wilbee and Ethan Keefer, scored first, with Wilbee getting the second, assisted by Crofts and Keefer. Finally Crofts scored an unassisted empty netter to seal the victory.

The tournament final saw the Storm face the Centre Hastings Grizzlies. We'd played the Grizzlies in two previous tournaments, and lost both times. We knew this was going to be an intense game and that it was: The Storm fought hard, and won the championship with a nail-biting 3-2 win. Goals went to Andrew Hall, assisted by Chase Burden and Chris Thompson; Chris Thompson assisted by Jake Bishop and Andrew Hall; and finally, Mark Saville assisted by Chase Burden and Andrew Hall. Chase Burden was voted MVP of this game. Congratulations to our boys.

The Storm boys returned to the ice in Minden on Sunday, for a game against the Almaguin Ice Devils. Josh Boice scored a natural hat trick with two goals in the first and one at the beginning of the second. Josh's goals were assisted by Chase Burden (two), Max MacNaull (two) and Ethan Keefer. The third goal in the second period was by Chris Thompson, assisted by Devyn Prentice and Josh Boice.

The Ice Devils attempted to battle back but the Storm shut the door and scored two more in the third, for a 6-0 win and a shutout for goalie Parker Smolen. The third period goals went to Max MacNaull, assisted by Devyn Prentice and Chase Burden; and Chris Thompson, assisted by Matt Wilbee and Josh Boice.

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Senior highlanders

Aging Well 10 tips for a better back

By Penny Brown

Dear Penny,

I have a bad back. Most of the time it's just achy. Sometimes I throw it out and can't move without pain for weeks. The holidays aren't even here yet and I'm already tensing up thinking about all the carrying and cooking and things I have to do. My doctor says it's a natural part of aging. She tells me to take an Advil which does help a little but surely there must be something I can do to help. Any tips?

Achy Alma

Dear Achy Alma,

Of course your doctor is right. The normal wear and tear of aging often causes back pain.

Your backbone is constructed of hard little bones called vertebrae which are stacked one on top of the other from the skull to the tailbone. Between the vertebrae are joints to allow flexibility and spongy discs to provide cushioning.

As we age, the discs in our back lose their resilience, or sponginess, which means they don't absorb the shock and stress of ordinary activities the way they used to do. The bones may begin to rub together. What's more, as the discs become thinner, sometimes the nerves that extend out from between the discs may get pinched or trapped. Your body responds by tightening the muscles around the painful spot. That's muscle spasm and it's painful—as you may already know.

You are right as well that you can help yourself. There are many things you can do to reduce the strain on your back during the holidays.

Here are some tips:

1. Rest. When your back is acting up, move as little as possible. Rest.
2. Do not shovel snow. It isn't good for your back and it isn't good for your heart. If you can, use a snow blower. If you can't, try to make some arrangements with a neighbour. If necessary, call your community care organization and ask them what you should do.
3. Wear sponge soled shoes in the kitchen. Standing and cooking on hard floors with hard shoes or flimsy slippers just invites a backache. Use your head to save your back.
4. Sit when you prepare food for cooking. There's no need to stand at the sink shucking peas when sitting works just as well—and saves your back.
5. Use a bundle buggy for shopping and ask for help loading it into your car. Better yet, for heavy items on

your Christmas list, order them on the phone and ask for delivery.

6. Do not lift anything heavy. Get help for heavy lifting.
7. If you are experiencing muscle spasm, apply heat to the tender area. Yes, some people suggest cold, but back spasms seem to respond better to heat. Use a heating pad or hot water bottle wrapped in a towel so you don't burn yourself. If the pain radiates down the back of your buttocks into your leg, you probably have sciatica and may find that alternating heat and cold works best. (A visit to your doctor for diagnosis and specific treatment may also be in order.)
8. Correct your posture. You may remember my column on good posture. Go back and read it again.
9. Physiotherapy is terrific. There are a number of successful physiotherapy treatments for an aging back, but you'll need a referral from your doctor.

10. Do not bend down from the waist. If you must get something from the floor, bend your knees and squat to retrieve it. Then use your legs to stand again. You may also reach for a chair seat or back to improve your leverage.

Since exercising for a bad back is a topic all its own, I'll address it in another column.

Readers, if you have any other questions—about your mobility, your comfort, or just about getting through your day more safely and easily, I want to hear them. For real-life answers you can use, write to penny@haliburtonhighlander.ca.



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Sports news

Fedeski fantastic in home opener Hawks shinny squad dominates Fenelon 7-0

By Terrance Gavan

One did not need a score sheet to determine which player dominated all facets of a varsity hockey game played last Thursday at the old Dysart Barn.

One did not even need to be watching the action through a zoom lens. A lucky spectator needed only to watch a lithe dangle down the left wing boards, thirty-five seconds into the first period, to determine the preeminence of Julia Fedeski.

All things considered, Fedeski will be an intrinsic contributor to the overall fortunes of the Red Hawk varsity girls' shinny squad this year. On the first set piece of the game, Fedeski picked up a loose puck from her own blue line, slashed sideways and, in a bat's blink, bolted down the left wing over the centre stripe and across the opposing blue line. She fired the puck toward the goal, where Megan Allore managed to steer the puck toward the net. The opportunistic Erin Little, shunted inside the crowded slot and was able to pump the puck behind a sprawling Fenelon Falls net-minder, Emily Parrott.



Coach Dan Marsden doing his Punch Imlach impression. Above: Julia Fedeski scored four goals and two assists in a 7-0 victory over Fenelon Falls last Thursday. Photos by Terrance Gavan.



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Turns out, the Hawks needed only that one tally, thanks to the shutdown, shut-up, shutout play of senior Hawks net stalwart, Jillian Mayhew. She faced 11 shots in the game, but thanks to the pressing Red Hawk defensive corps, few of those shots got by with any disarming intensity.

Fedeski scored four goals, along with two assists, to lead all scorers in the 7-0 thrashing of the visiting Falcons. She's lithe, quick and dominating, but the most impressive part of Fedeski's game is something we'll call the Mike Ridley factor. Ridley was a surprise undrafted pick by the New York Rangers, way back in 1985, out of the University of Manitoba. He was signed as a free agent because Rangers' assistant Reg Higgs – who coached against the former CIAU Player of the Year while head knock at U of Regina – put the word in to the boss. Higgs's recommendation? "Ridley goes into the corners, and he's always the first one out."

It is a seldom noted strength, this hardwired capacity to remain glued to your Tackaberries. It's called being strong on your skates, and it's that feisty motor skill, we surmise, which sets Fedeski apart. She sheds checks with the alacrity and expediency of a gazelle fleeing a lion. She seldom, if ever, gets knocked off her skates.

She also possesses sniper's hands and a deadly shot. A redirected one-timer from the point clanged like Big Ben off the post in the second period last Thursday. That shot remains the best display of hand-eye quickness I've seen anywhere — boys or girls — this season.

Her last goal was as scary as it was accurate. Wide open at the top of the left-hand face-off circle, she Bobby Hulled a wired shot by Parrott that elicited not a wisp of recognition from the poor Fenelon backstop. Parrot did not flinch, even an inch.

Of course one snap-handed, strong skating defenseman does not a team make. The Hawks overall defensive corps, with goalies

Mayhew and Connor Marsden, and hard-checking Jessica Duchene, are brilliant from the net out. The forwards know how to challenge the opposition's goaltender. And they possess six players up front that can all put the puck in the net.

Megan Allore added a goal and three assists and Sam Tallman added a goal as well. The other helpers went to Kate Denniston, Breana LaRue and Alex Litwin.

Coach Dan Marsden, who along with co-coach Vince Duchene have the Hawks on target this season, said that the Hawks executed well against Fenelon.

"Fedeski played very well defensively," said Marsden after the contest. "She handled the puck really well for us and pushed the play."

Small sample size, but the home opener certainly put a stamp on the season to date.

"No, I don't know what the rest of the league looks like, but we're preparing for every game the same way," said Marsden. "Today we came out with some extra intensity. The last game we played Fenelon we had a lot of shots but the puck didn't reach the net." That exhibition ended 1-0 and gave the girls some extra incentive going into their season opening tilt.

The Hawks are headed to an historic hockey site, Lake Placid, for a pre-Christmas tournament. They leave on Thursday, Dec 15, for the three day tourney.

"The girls are really looking forward to it," said Marsden. "We didn't get to any tournaments last year because they were cancelled. I think this will be a good opportunity for the girls to get away. We've got some young players and senior players and that was the focus — we want to make sure that we're a team and that was the goal in setting this trip up."

Today, Dec 8, the Hawks face off against LCVI at 2 pm in the Dysart Barn. On Dec 13, the Hawks host TASS at the Barn. Game time is 2 pm.

Sports news

Hawks hockey compact, quick and deadly

Hawks 17 – Kenner Rams 0
By Terrance Gavan

We could be cruel.
We shall be kind. Kind of kind, that is. Because the mere reporting of a lopsided score in bold 15 point font is, well, kind of cruel.
Brass tacks? There is no easy way to report on a game that begins with the following tote: Hal High Red Hawks 17 – Kenner Rams 0.
I mean, what can we say in the face of such complete and utter domination? More important, what do we do during the actual game?
Here's how we handled it.
Sometime just before the clock buzzed the end of the first period, we pack up our camera and left the building. We strive to remain inconspicuous as we depart the sports complex, conspicuously. We pull up a collar, we place our sunglasses on, and we pretend we're making a cell phone call.
But Haliburton is a small town. And as we clambered out of the penalty box, head down, and earphones tuned into the Steve Jobs biography, we are pretending to talk discreetly into our cell phone. "No, I didn't get that last bit, can you hear me now?"
No joy. A voice broke through the narration of my iPhone

audible book. Dedicated hockey dad, Hawks fan and friend, Stevie Churko yells, "Hey Gav! Where are you going?" Busted.
"I'm going home to put on a rerun of Custer's Last Stand! General George, at least, had a fast horse," I murmured. "I'll be back for the third period." Boos ensued. Tough crowd, in Haliburton Arena.
I think the Hawks had already tallied seven or eight goals. Thankfully the refs told the young women working the clock to cease and desist with any further embellishment after the score reached 6-0 on the old Dysart Barn abacus.
We did return in the third period. To our sanguine relief, the young Rams had survived their 'Siege at Sevastopol.' For the record, the Kenner Rams have been outscored 53-1 in four league games this season.
We talked to Ron Yake after the game — we have been doing back corridor interviews, asking dumb post game questions, since way back in the 70s.
Here's our gem of an opener: "Well, Ronnie, huh?" Yake smiled and said, "Yep." And really, we could have left it at that. But we forged ahead and followed that up with the Danny Gullivan book of post-game quiplets.
Yake said that the guys played well – understatement.
He did admit that Kenner is not blessed with a wealth of talent this season – under-understatement.

Then he said that things will get tougher for the Hawks as the season progresses – under-under-understatement. They'd have to get tougher? Would they? What could be worse? The Hindenberg touching down at center ice?
Here's the thing about Yake: he's honest and self-effacing – which we like. Yake says the right things and he never lies, but he also never fails to give the other guys on the ice their due.
No, he's not manic about it. Doesn't seek to over-embellish what's going on. But he is respectful, humble and forthright in his dissection of the game. If we had to sum up his attitude last Wednesday, we could do it in one "There (Kenner), but for the grace of god, and Toe Blake, go we."
Understand that both Hawk coaches, Yake and Bruce Griffith, have been on the demure side of some very significant blowouts. Griffith coaches junior football, so he knows all about the ego and the id of the lopsided hammering. And Kenner must be in a rebuilding year. They're not a perennial powerhouse, but they usually do a lot better than this in the Kawartha League.
"The kids played well, and give credit to Kenner, nothing got out of hand on the ice," said Yake. And that's credit and kudos to Kenner coaches Steve Armitage and Paul Stillman, who managed the game responsibly.

continued on page 14

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Sports news

Yake and Howe score four apiece to pace the race

continued from page 13

The refs called only nine penalties and the Kenner players played without any chippiness – with the exception of a late game hit from behind that resulted in a game misconduct.

“We’ll obviously be challenged, because Kawartha is a tough league,” said Yake.

So Ron Yake gave his kids credit. He upped the ante on the Hawks by stating unequivocally that there remains, on their plate, the bulk of a tough and tumbled Kawartha Hockey schedule.

For the record, Aaron Hillier led all scorers with four goals and three assists. Brett Yake had four goals and an assist, Ryan Hunter scored three, while Nate Feir scored twice and added two assists. Greg Clements had a goal and three assists, Tanner Hamilton scored one and added two assists, and Tanner Ballantyne had four helpers. Carson Roberts ended with a goal and three assists, Nick Hunter added a goal and an assist, and Jordan Howe added three assists. Single assists went to Drake Montgomery, Andrew Murray, Chris Hall and Kieran Poropat.

On Friday (Dec 2) the Hawks were on the road against St. Thomas Aquinas. Monday night’s (Dec 5), home game versus the IE Weldon Wildcats was postponed due to some scheduling conflicts.

The Hawks are off to the annual Oshawa schoolboy tournament this weekend, Dec 9-11.



Brett Yake scored four goals and an assist. Photo by Terrance Gavan.

Hawks hockey hot – and unhampered in slot

By Terrance Gavan

Let’s run some numbers.

Specifically, let’s ponder 30 and 2.

That’s the wide margin of error – 30 goals for, and two against — the varsity hockey Hawks have compiled in three regular season games this season.

On Friday afternoon, the Hawks beat St. Thomas Aquinas 10-1 on the road. That pushes their seasonal tilt to 3-0, and now we have a problem. To wit: how do two coaches centre the psyches of some very young hockey players after opening a new season with such complete and utter dominance?

We chatted with Bruce Griffith on Tuesday night and he says that both he and Coach Ron Yake are not worried about the overconfidence factor at all.

“It wasn’t as lopsided as it sounds,” chuckled Griffith. “Our team just played really, really well on Friday. Our lines were all clicking and it was a nice clean game, so we got a chance to skate. We started slow, but once we got the first couple of goals they just pulled away.”

Griffith also gave a huge shout-out to goaltender Andy Elia. “Andy played really well for us and he’s been really dominant this year,” said Griffith.

Apropos of challenging the lads, this weekend the Hawks are headed to Oshawa and one of the most prestigious annual schoolboy hockey championships of the year.

“It’s actually in Whitby at the Iroquois Centre and there will be 32 teams there from all over,” smiled Griffith. “It’ll be a good test for the team.”

And good preparation for two games next week on the road, and one of the premiere match-ups of the season right back here at the old Dysart Barn, next Monday, Dec 19 at 7:15 pm.

That game will factor big for the Hawks as they move into the Christmas break. If you’re in the market for some really good local hockey, bookmark that date.

Send hockey and other sports tips to gav@haliburtonhighlander.ca. [Twitter.com/terrancegavan](https://twitter.com/terrancegavan).

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Sports news

Pardon the Eruption By Terrance Gavan

Round the world at the Haliburton Curling Club



Sweep it yourself dammit! I'm SAD!

I was a Finn this weekend for two days. I played my role with strict adherence to the historical demography.

It was all part of the rules and regimen

for the First Annual Round the World Bonspiel at the Haliburton Curling Club. Teams were supposed to assume the persona of the country they represented.

I was Finnish, and, as usual, threw myself into my role. I am a graduate of the Stanislavski School of acting. I have read Chekhov, and thus remain firmly entrenched to the rubric of the method school. I live the character. I research and I undertake with Spartan meticulousness the passion's play. Play a Finn? Be a Finn.

So I spent last week on the Internet, doing the de rigueur diligence. Seeking to incorporate the inner heartbeat of the Finn's world view, I phoned my friend Gunnar Tolkiensen in Thunder Bay. In old Port Arthur there exists one of the largest expat Finnish populations in the world. Thunder Bay is to Finns what Gimli is to Icelanders.

Think about that for a little bit. Think about the choices. Thunder Bay and Gimli rest on the futile edges of the Canadian arctic.

Now ponder this. Fleeing Finns, spirits broken by the harsh landscape of their homeland, the endless winters, diminished light, snow, homicidal reindeer and non-existent summers, had the whole world to choose from when the boarded boats out of Lapland.

Hawaii, Bermuda, the Costa del Sol, the Riviera, Buenos Aires, Paris, Florida and the West Indies.

And they chose? Thunder Bay. In northern Canada, where seasonal affective disorder (SAD) runs so rampant that a special 40,000 square foot Psychiatry wing was added to the Thunder Bay General Hospital just five years ago and already the city is pondering an expansion. So complete was my research on the Finnish persona that I made an appointment with the local psychiatrist here in Haliburton tomorrow at 9 am.

Let me explain. The Finnish paradigm is unusually morbid. The method template requires one to adopt the pivotal facets of the role. I am at heart a happy person, and so, the part was quite challenging.

I was dour, I was glum, I wore Oakley goggles, knit scarf, Finnish flag and reindeer antlers. I cursed the Finnish government, spat on Helsinki,

and I threw tantrums and empty vodka bottles at my curling opponents. I wore a blue light to combat the SADs.

Then? I went to a sauna to contemplate my navel, and suicide. Don't blame me for this curt segue into the balefully glum Finnish psyche.

Blame Wikipedia for its succinct unraveling of the Finnish soul. In Wiki we are told that Finns drink a lot of vodka – not an option for this alcoholic Finn-for-a-day. Finns are fussy, finicky, sanguine and lopsidedly pessimistic. They endure 1.2 hours of sunshine every day from September to May.

It is cold and dark in Finland. Their number-one export is powdered reindeer antlers to China. Their favorite appetizer is sardines on toast. These characteristics lead to one of the highest suicide rates in the developed world.

Thankfully the global Bonspiel ended with an amazing dinner – round the world delicacies like bratwurst, schnitzel, tortellini, Finnish wine, and English sticky toffee. By Sunday morning I was back to normal. I was able to shed my rapid-onset pessimism and return to my Icelandic and Irish roots. I watched football, talked to faeries and elves, and sang happy songs about colonialist Imperialists, dire pitched battles, pikes on heads, war and wakes.

We like our bonspiels in Haliburton. Curling is one of those oft-maligned "lifetime sports."

Yes, knuckleheads, I hear the sniggers. I curl three to four times per week. And I sweep like there's no tomorrow. I am in better shape aerobically than most men of my advanced years, but I like the Haliburton Curling Club for more than the exercise — it's got bonspiels and entrenches a myriad choice of leagues. I meet a lot of interesting people and I absolutely love curling.

Daytime or night time, or part time. If you're new to the area and looking for somewhere to meet people; or if you want to get back to or start curling, drop by the club or phone membership guru Bob MacNaull at 705-457-1872. The winter curling schedule starts in the New Year; registration forms are due Dec 20.

New adult curlers get a \$40 discount on the regular membership price of \$170, and newbies get to curl and spare in a wide choice of leagues. Curling begins on Jan 2, 2012, with a free clinic for beginners on Jan 7.

Go to haliburtoncurlingclub.com for more information. Or write gav@haliburtonhighlander.ca.



Team Canada skip Larry Holden (cowboy hat) watches while Sweden's Joe Sebesta calls the line. Photo by Terrance Gavan

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Highlander books

Haliburton County's Hot Reads

The following are the top 5 fiction and non-fiction titles as requested at the Haliburton County Public Library for the week of December 4th-11th.

HCPL's TOP 5 FICTION

1. Zero Day by David Baldacci
2. The Virgin Cure by Ami McKay 🇨🇦
3. Before the Poison by Peter Robinson 🇨🇦
4. V is for Vengeance by Sue Grafton
5. Half Blood Blues by Esi Edugyan 🇨🇦



HCPL's TOP 5 NON-FICTION

1. Steve Jobs by Walter Isaacson
2. From This Moment On by Shania Twain 🇨🇦
3. A Stolen Life by Jaycee Dugard
4. Half-Blood Blues by Esi Edugyan 🇨🇦
5. Boomerang: Travels in the Third World by Michael Lewis

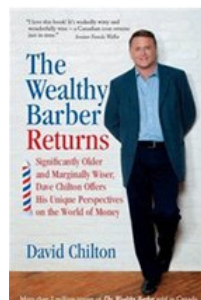
Haliburton County loves their David Baldacci. His latest, Zero Day, released November 1st, is currently the most popular title at the library. Zero Day is followed closely by The Virgin Cure by Canadian writer Ami McKay. This is McKay's follow up to The Birth House, her wildly popular 2006 debut. Another Canadian, Peter Robinson, takes this week's 3rd place spot with Before the Poison, which stands alone from his Inspector Banks series.

HCPL's non-fiction list also features some Canadian titles,

including The Wealthy Barber Returns by financial guru David Chilton. This is Chilton's sequel to The Wealthy Barber, which was originally released in 1989, and is the bestselling book of any kind in Canada – ever. It will be interesting to see if he will be able to even come close to replicating this success with his new title.

LIBRARY EVENTS

Attend the Friends of the Haliburton County Public Library's Friendly Christmas Sale! Gently used books, library mugs, gift baskets and more are available. Minden Hills Branch - Thursday, December 8 & 15 in the Book Nook, 10 - 4 pm. Dysart Branch - Friday and Saturday, December 9 & 10, Roberts Room, 10 - 4 pm.



All featured books available at
Haliburton County Public Library

Sir Sam's opening postponed

Warm weather delays snowmaking

By Terrance Gavan

It's been a while since November crept with such reluctance to December. Now with a few days of cold behind us, is winter finally here?

That's what the snowmakers are asking at Sir Sam's Ski and Bike Resort.

The hill was looking very good about two weeks back. The snow guns were out and blowing snow; the ground was holding firm with the first tatters of frost.

Then it all went poof. Spring reloaded, golf courses reopened, and Sir Sam's opening day – slated for Saturday, Dec 10 – appeared, of a sudden, to be in jeopardy.

Do not shoot the messenger, young Jedi shredders and old irascible ski bums. The centre of an eastern Chinook did not disperse on time to get enough snow on the hill for the scheduled opening day. Despite concerted efforts, the snowmaking crew just could not get on the hill early enough this week.

Resort manager Chris Bishop says the crew made the call Tuesday night, as temperatures hovered around the freezing mark.

"We're looking at the advanced forecast, and it's looking good for snowmaking the rest of the week and into the weekend," says Bishop. "But no, we won't be opening this weekend as planned. We hope to be open next weekend (Dec 17-18)."

It's been a few decades since they've missed opening day at Sir Sam's. And with the addition of some towers and state-of-the-art snowmaking guns, it doesn't take long to fill up the green spaces with white.

Bishop advises skiers and boarders to stay current with conditions via the Sir Sam's website. There is a link at sirsams.com that will take you directly to the webcams, and you can see for yourself how snowmaking is proceeding.

The resort is advertising early season specials on the web as well. You can save 50 percent on daily lift tickets, rental equipment and snow school lessons for December 17, 18, 23 and 24. Visit www.sirsams.com or call 705-754-2298 for more information.



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Community events

Santa and snakes

Wanakita Christmas breakfast full of surprises



Isla Dobbins has her face painted. Photo by Will Jones

By Will Jones

After parading through Minden, Haliburton and countless other neighbourhoods in recent weeks, Santa got a welcome chance to sit down at YMCA Camp Wanakita last weekend. His rest was short-lived, however, as he soon found himself taking orders (sorry, wishes) for countless Christmas gifts at the fun event put on by camp staff.

This year, the second the camp has hosted Breakfast with Santa, saw well over one hundred people attend the free morning of face painting, games, magic and an animal show.

Kids aged from nine to ninety were amazed by the tricks of magician Kyle Fisher and the balloon-twisting genius of Steve Fisher. Steve created everything from ladybugs to spiders, flowers to helicopters with his bendy blow-ups. Camp staff hosted fun games and face painting, while the Muskoka Wildlife Centre brought along Petunia the skunk, Blossom the opossum and Liquorice the rat snake, among others, to meet the enthralled guests.

Family Camp Director and Event Coordinator, Ruth Mills, said, "We wanted to do this to give back. We feel proud to be part of this wonderful community. We hope everyone

has a great time."

She went on to thank sponsors and explain that the breakfast and entertainment, all of which were totally free for attendees, had been made possible by the generosity of a range of sponsors including Curry Motors, Haliburton Lumber, The Independent, Kellogg's, The Photo Shop, The Pump Shop, Sharp Electric, Sysco and V&S Department Store.

Mills plus her staff at Wanakita did a great job all around. The breakfast was hearty and there were no major instances of children being frightened by the big man with the white beard. At one point, a large tiger did roam the breakfast tables, causing numerous kiddies to cower behind their parents. The ladies from Muskoka Wildlife refused to take responsibility, and the adults, being what they are today, pushed their kids forward, bidding, "Go say hi to the nice kitty."

Thankfully, the seven foot tall Tony, the orange and black striped promoter for Kellogg's' Frosted Flakes, was not offended by the children's initial shyness. He soon had them dancing along to his feline festive jig, at YMCA Camp Wanakita's best-yet Breakfast with Santa.



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TheHighlander Community Calendar

December 2011

Thursday - 8

- Euchre Nights, Minden Legion Branch 636, 7:30 pm
- Bid Euchre, Community Care, Haliburton, 1 pm, for seniors 55+ or physically disabled adults 18+, Ida 705-457-2941
- Friends of the Haliburton County Public Library's "Friendly" Christmas Sale, Minden Hills Branch Library, in the Book Nook, 10 am to 4 pm, Christmas Book Baskets, library mugs full of goodies, new Friends book bag and more

Friday - 9

- Community Care Christmas Lunch, Wilberforce Legion Branch 624, 12 noon to 2 pm, advance tickets only, order by December 1, \$15, 705-457-2941, hilary@communitycarehaliburton.com
- Cribbage, Community Care, Haliburton, 1 pm, for seniors 55+ or physically disabled adults 18+, Ida 705-457-2941
- Fish & Chips dinner at the Minden Legion Branch 636, 5 pm to 7 pm, John Sloan, 705-286-1397, jicsloan@gmail.com
- Friends of the Haliburton County Public Library's "Friendly" Christmas Sale, Dysart Branch Haliburton Library, in the Roberts Room, 10 am to 4 pm, Christmas Book Baskets, library mugs full of goodies, new Friends book bag and more
- Community Christmas & Skating Party, sponsored by The Rotary Club of Haliburton, Dysart Community Centre Arena, 5 pm to 8 pm, bring the whole family for an evening of festive fun with skating, music, hot cocoa, pizza & treats, games, prizes - presents for all the kids and bring your camera for a picture with Santa!
- Play Pool, Wilberforce Legion Branch 624, 705-448-2221, jandreamweaver@aol.com
- Jam Session, Everyone Welcome, Wilberforce Legion Branch 624, 7 pm, local musicians get together for an evening of fun and entertainment, anyone playing a musical instrument is welcome to join in, jandreamweaver@aol.com

Saturday & Sunday - 10-11

- Heritage Ballet presents The Nutcracker, Northern Lights, Saturday 7:30 pm, Sunday 2 pm, tickets \$15, available at Cranberry Cottage, Haliburton and Pharnasave, Minden

Saturday - 10

- Highland Trio, Minden Legion Branch 636, 1 pm to 5 pm, open mic opportunities, meat draw, 50/50 draw
- Short Story Evenings, Dominion Hotel, Minden, 7 pm,

local writers read their original short stories, everyone welcome, no charge, 705-286-2592, marjorie.ludlow-green@sympatico.ca, www.haliburtonwriters.ca

- Karaoke, Minden Legion Branch 636, 7:30 pm, John Sloan, 705-286-1397, jicsloan@gmail.com
- Friends of the Haliburton County Public Library's "Friendly" Christmas Sale, Dysart Branch Haliburton Library, in the Roberts Room, 10 am to 4 pm, Christmas Book Baskets, library mugs full of goodies, new Friends book bag and more
- Community Christmas dinner, Robert McCausland Memorial Community Centre, Gooderham, Gooderham Community Action Group, Marilyn Woode, 705-447-2906, marilyn.woode@gmail.com
- Women over Breakfast: Haliburton Women in Business, Kosy Komer, Haliburton, 9 am to 11 am, Angela Clarke, 705-754-9519, wob@haliburtonwomeninbusiness.ca
- Meat Draw, Wilberforce Legion Branch 624, 705-448-2221, jandreamweaver@aol.com

Sunday - 11

- Country Music Jamboree, SG Nesbitt Arena, 1 pm to 5 pm, 705-286-1544, lindamuggins@hotmail.com
- NFL Football, Big Screen TV, Minden Legion Branch 636, 12:30 pm, John Sloan, 705-286-1397, jicsloan@gmail.com
- Ladies Auxiliary Breakfast, Wilberforce Legion Branch 624, 705-448-2221, jandreamweaver@aol.com

Monday - 12

- Celebrate Recovery, Lakeside Baptist Church, 7 pm to 10 pm, admin@lakesidebaptist.ca
- Cloggers, Lloyd Watson Centre, Wilberforce, 7 pm, \$1, all ages welcome
- Contract Bridge, Community Care, Haliburton, 1 pm, for seniors 55+ or physically disabled adults 18+, Ida 705-457-2941
- Santa Claus Parade & Party, Wilberforce, parade starts at 12:30 pm followed by lunch with Santa at the Lloyd Watson Centre, contact Jan Barton for further information, joan@joanbarton.ca
- Bid Euchre, Wilberforce Legion, Branch 624, 7 pm, 705-448-2221, jandreamweaver@aol.com

Tuesday - 13

- Christmas Bake Sale, Lion's Hall, Minden, 2 pm to 4 pm
- Euchre Night, West Guilford Recreation Centre, 7 pm to 10 pm, 705-754-1457, carolstamp@sympatico.ca
- Art Club for Kids, Agnes Jamieson Gallery, 3:30 pm to 5 pm, 705-286-3783

- Pool League, Dominion Hotel, Minden, open to all, 705-286-5035

Wednesday - 14

- Art & Tea, Rails End Gallery, for adults who like to talk about art and drink tea
- Community Drumming/Rhythm Circle, Rails End Gallery, 7:30 pm to 9 pm
- Story Circle, Gooderham Public Library, Pine Street, Gooderham, 11:30 am, 705-457-2241 or 705-447-3183
- Quilt Guild, Camp Adelaide, 9:30 am to 4 pm, Yvonne Taylor 705-286-4905
- Darts, Haliburton Legion Branch 129, 7:30 pm
- Darts, Wilberforce Legion Branch 624, 7:30 pm, 705-448-2221, jandreamweaver@aol.com
- Parent/Tot Kindergym every Wednesday!, Haliburton Dance Arts, Maple Avenue, Haliburton, 10 am to 10:40 am, classes \$10 each, 705-754-0007, www.haliburtondancearts.com, haliburtondance@sympatico.ca
- Baby Ballet every Wednesday! Haliburton Dance Arts, Maple Avenue, Haliburton, 10:45 am to 11:15 am, classes \$10 each, 705-754-0007, www.haliburtondancearts.com, haliburtondance@sympatico.ca

Thursday - 15

- Crafty Girls Club, Art Hive, 705-754-0021
- Community Care Christmas Lunch, Minden Legion, 12 noon to 2 pm, advance tickets only, order by December 8, \$15, 705-457-2941, hilary@communitycarehaliburton.com
- Euchre Nights, Minden Legion Branch 636, 7:30 pm
- Bid Euchre, Community Care, Haliburton, 1 pm, for seniors 55+ or physically disabled adults 18+, Ida 705-457-2941
- Christmas Concert, Northern Lights Pavilion, Carl Dixon & Friends, 7 pm to 9 pm, to raise money for the Haliburton Food Bank
- Friends of the Haliburton County Public Library's "Friendly" Christmas Sale, Minden Hills Branch Library, in the Book Nook, 10 am to 4 pm, Christmas Book Baskets, library mugs full of goodies, new Friends book bag and more

Friday - 16

- Shepherd's Table Community Supper, Lakeside Baptist Church, 5:30 pm, 705-457-2851
- Fish & Chips dinner at the Minden Legion Branch 636, 5 pm to 7 pm, John Sloan, 705-286-1397

DO YOU HAVE AN EVENT TO ANNOUNCE?

Email details to louise@haliburtonhighlander.ca by Mondays at noon.

Classifieds page

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

WILBERFORCE SANTA CLAUS PARADE and party for kids is on again this year, taking place in wilberforce on december 11. The parade starts at 12:30 followed by lunch with santa at the lloyd watson centre. For further information, contact jan barton, joan@joanbarton.ca.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Wildlife Donations - Wilberforce Legion Branch 624 would appreciate donations to our Annual Wildlife Dinner being held Saturday December 3. If you have excess Moose, Venison or Bear, our Branch would appreciate your contribution to our dinner which has long been a vital part of our local culture. Please contact the Branch at (705) 448-2221 or Brian Eves at (705) 448-3512.

JAM SESSIONS are heating up at the Wilberforce Legion Branch 624 every Friday night at 7pm. Talented local musicians get together for an evening of fun and entertainment. Anyone playing a musical instrument is welcome to join in. We get some excellent musicians and a great audience is there to support and enjoy. Don't be shy; come out and have some fun!

FOR RENT

1 BEDROOM APARTMENT between Minden and Haliburton, \$575 per month including utilities. First & last month deposit and references required. Please call Carmen at 705-286-0343.

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Red Hawk Schedule

Dec 13: The varsity hockey boys team is on the road against Thomas A Stewart. Game time is 3:45 pm. At home, the varsity girls hockey team plays host to Thomas A Stewart in the old Dysart Barn — game time for that tilt is 2 pm.

Dec 14: The junior and senior girls volleyball teams are headed to Lindsay for some hard setting competition. The games are slated to get underway at 2 pm. At home, Both basketball teams are hosting Brock High School at the Hawks nest; the juniors play at 3 pm and the seniors will play at 4 pm.

Dec 15: The varsity hockey team is headed to Fenelon Falls for an afternoon tilt beginning at 3:30 pm.

Dec 16: Red Hawk Wrestling Tournament is slated for the Red Hawk gymnasium all day next Friday. Come on out and watch some excellent wrestling action.

Dec 16-18: Christmas comes early for the women's varsity hockey team. The Red Hawks are headed to Lake Placid for a tournament. It's an historic venue for a hockey tourney and the girls are all looking forward to it.



**Invites you to register
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